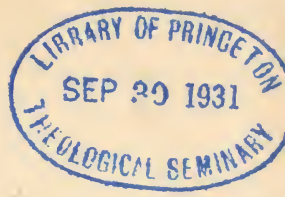


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THE  
LIVES  
OF  
DONNE, WOTTON, HOOKER, HERBERT,  
AND SANDERSON.

BY IZAAK WALTON.

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR  
AND HIS WRITINGS.

VOL. II.



BOSTON:  
HILLIARD, GRAY, AND COMPANY.  
CAMBRIDGE:  
BROWN, SHATTUCK, AND CO.

M DCCC XXXII.

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—“Dr. Johnson talked of IZAAK WALTON's Lives,  
which was one of his favorite books.”

BOSWELL.

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THE LIFE  
OF  
MR. GEORGE HERBERT.

---



TO HIS VERY WORTHY AND MUCH HONORED FRIEND,

MR. IZAAK WALTON,

UPON HIS EXCELLENT LIFE OF

MR. GEORGE HERBERT.

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I.

HEAVEN'S youngest son, its Benjamin,  
Divinity's next brother, sacred Poesy,  
No longer shall a virgin reckoned be  
    (Whate'er with others 't is) by me,  
    A female muse, as were the Nine ;  
    But (full of vigor masculine)  
An essence male, with angels his companions, shine.  
With angels first the heavenly youth was bred,  
And, when a child, instructed them to sing  
The praises of th' Immortal King  
    Who Lucifer in triumph led :  
For, as in chains the monster sank to hell,  
And tumbling headlong down the precipice fell  
By him first taught, "How art thou fallen, thou  
    morning star ?" they said,

Too fondly then, we have fancied him a maid :  
We, the vain brethren of the rhyming trade ;  
A female angel less would Urbin's\* skill upbraid.

## II.

Thus 't was in heaven : this, Poesy's sex and age ;  
And, when he thence to our lower world came  
down,

He chose a form more like his own,  
And Jesse's youngest son inspired with holy rage ;  
The sprightly shepherd felt unusual fire,

And up he took his tuneful lyre ;  
He took it up, and struck 't, and his own soft touches  
did admire.

Thou, Poesy, on him didst bestow  
Thy choicest gift, an honor showed before to none ;  
And to prepare his way to th' Hebrew throne,  
Gav'st him thy empire and dominion ;

The happy land of verse, where flow  
Rivers of milk, and woods of laurel grow :

Wherewith thou didst adorn his brow,  
And mad'st his first, more flourishing, and triumph-  
ant crown.

Assist me thy great prophet's praise to sing,  
David, the poet's and blessed Israel's king :  
And with the dancing echo, let the mountains  
ring !

Then, on the wings of some auspicious wind,  
Let his great name from earth be raised on high,  
And in the starry volume of the sky

\* Raphael Urbin, the famous painter.



A lasting record find :  
Be with his mighty psaltery joined ;  
Which, taken long since up into the air,  
And called the Harp, makes a bright constellation  
there.

## III.

Worthy it was to be translated hence,  
And there, in view of all, exalted hang :  
To which so oft the princely prophet sang,  
And mystic oracles did dispense.  
Though, had it still remained below,  
More wonders of it we had seen,  
How great the mighty Herbert's skill had been :  
Herbert, who could so much without it do ;  
Herbert, who did its chords distinctly know ;  
More perfectly than any child of verse below.

O ! had we known him half so well !  
But then, my friend, there had been left for you  
Nothing so fair, and worthy praise to do ;  
Who so exactly all his story tell,  
That, though he did not want his bays,  
Nor all the monuments virtue can raise,  
Your hand he did, to eternize his praise.  
Herbert and Donne again are joined,  
Now here below, as they 're above ;  
These friends are in their old embraces twined ;  
And since by you the interview 's designed,  
Too weak to part them death does prove ;  
For in this book they meet again, as in one heaven  
they love.

SAM. WOODFORDE, D. D.

BENSTEAD, April 3.

IN VITAM

GEORGII HERBERTI,

AB

ISAACO WALTONO SCRIPTAM

O QUAM erubesco cum tuam vitam lego,  
 Herberte sancte, quamque me pudet meæ !  
 Ego talpa cæcus hic humi fodiens miser,  
 Aquila volatu tu petens nubes tuo ;  
 Ego Choicum vas terreas fæces olens,  
 Tu (sola namque Urania tibi ex Musis placet)  
 Nil tale spiras ; sed sapis cælum et Deum,  
 Omnique vitæ, libri et omni, lineâ ;  
 Templumque tecum ubique circumfers tuum :  
 Domi-porta cæli, cui domus propria, optima :  
 Ubi Rex, ibi Roma, Imperii sedes ; ubi  
 Tu, sancte vates, templum ibi, et cælum, et Deus.  
 Tu quale nobis intuendum clericis  
 Speculum sacerdotale, tu qualem piis  
 Pastoris ideam et libro et vitâ tuâ,  
 Tu quale sanctitatis elementis bonæ,  
 Morumque nobis tradis exemplum ac typum !  
 Typum,\* Magistro nempe proximum tuo,  
 Exemplar illud grande qui solus fuit.  
 Canonizet ergo quos velit Dominus Papa ;

\* Sic Christum solens vocavit quoties ejus mentionem fecit.

Sibique sanctos, quos facit, servet suos  
Colatque ; sancte Herberte, tu Sanctus meus ;  
“ Oraq̃ue pro me,” dicerem, si fas, tibi.  
Sed hos honores par nec est sanctis dari ;  
Velis nec ipse ; recolo te, sed non colo.  
Talis legenda est vita Sancti, concio  
Ad promovendum quam potens et efficax !  
Per talia exempla est breve ad cœlos iter.  
Waltone, macte, perge vitas scribere,  
Et penicillo, quo vales, insigni adhuc  
Sanctorum imagines coloribus suis  
Plures repræsentare ; quod tu dum facis,  
Vitamque et illis et tibi das posthumam,  
Lectoris æternæque vitæ consulis.  
Urge ergo pensum ; et interim scias velim,  
Plutarchus alter sis licet Biographus,  
Herberto, amice, vix Parallelum dabis.  
Liceat libro addere hanc coronidem tuo ;  
Vir, an Poeta, Orator an melior fuit,  
Meliorne amicus, sponsus, an pastor gregis,  
Herbertus, incertum ; et quis hoc facile sciat,  
Melior ubi ille, qui fuit ubique optimus ?

JACOB. DUPORT, S. T. P.

Decanus Petr.



## THE INTRODUCTION.

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IN a late retreat from the business of this world, and those many little cares with which I have too often cumbered myself, I fell into a contemplation of some of those historical passages that are recorded in sacred story, and more particularly of what had passed betwixt our Blessed Saviour, and that wonder of women, and sinners, and mourners, Saint Mary Magdalen. I call her Saint, because I did not then, nor do now consider her, as when she was possessed with seven devils; not as when her wanton eyes and dishevelled hair were designed and managed to charm and insnare amorous beholders: but, I did then, and do now consider her, as after she had expressed a visible and sacred sorrow for her sensualities; as after those eyes had wept such a flood of penitential tears as did wash, and that hair had wiped, and she most passionately kissed the feet of hers and our blessed Jesus. And I do now consider,

that because she loved much, not only much was forgiven her ; but that, beside that blessed blessing of having her sins pardoned, and the joy of knowing her happy condition, she also had from him a testimony, that her alabaster box of precious ointment poured on his head and feet, and that spikenard, and those spices that were by her dedicated to embalm and preserve his sacred body from putrefaction, should so far preserve her own memory, that these demonstrations of her sanctified love, and of her officious and generous gratitude, should be recorded and mentioned wheresoever his gospel should be read ; intending thereby, that, as his, so her name should also live to succeeding generations, even till time itself shall be no more.

Upon occasion of which fair example, I did lately look back, and not without some content (at least to myself) that I have endeavoured to deserve the love, and preserve the memory of my two deceased friends, Dr. Donne and Sir Henry Wotton, by declaring the several employments and various accidents of their lives : and though Mr. George Herbert (whose Life I now intend to write) were to me a stranger as to his person, for I have only seen him ; yet since he was, and was worthy to be, their friend, and very many of his have been mine, I judge it may not be unacceptable to those that knew any of them in their

lives, or do now know them by mine or their own writings, to see this conjunction of them after their deaths, without which many things that concerned them, and some things that concerned the age in which they lived, would be less perfect, and lost to posterity.

For these reasons I have undertaken it; and if I have prevented any abler person, I beg pardon of him and my reader.





THE LIFE  
OF  
MR. GEORGE HERBERT.

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GEORGE HERBERT was born the third day of April, in the year of our redemption 1593. The place of his birth was near to the town of Montgomery, and in that castle that did then bear the name of that town and county. That castle was then a place of state and strength, and had been successively happy in the family of the Herberts, who had long possessed it, and, with it, a plentiful estate, and hearts as liberal to their poor neighbours ; a family, that hath been blessed with men of remarkable wisdom, and a willingness to serve their country, and, indeed, to do good to all mankind ; for which they are eminent. But alas ! this family did in the late rebellion suffer extremely in their estates ; and the heirs of that castle saw it laid level with that earth that was too good to bury those wretches that were the cause of it.

The father of our George was Richard Herbert, the son of Edward Herbert, Knight, the son of Richard Herbert, Knight, the son of the famous Sir Richard Herbert of Colebrook, in the county of Monmouth, Banneret, who was the youngest brother of that memorable William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, that lived in the reign of our King Edward the Fourth.

His mother was Magdalen Newport, the youngest daughter of Sir Richard, and sister to Sir Francis Newport, of High Arkall, in the county of Salop, Knight, and grandfather of Francis Lord Newport, now Comptroller of his Majesty's Household ; a family that for their loyalty have suffered much in their estates, and seen the ruin of that excellent structure, where their ancestors have long lived, and been memorable for their hospitality.

This mother of George Herbert (of whose person, and wisdom, and virtue, I intend to give a true account in a seasonable place) was the happy mother of seven sons, and three daughters, which, she would often say, was Job's number, and Job's distribution ; and as often bless God, that they were neither defective in their shapes or in their reason ; and very often reprove them that did not praise God for so great a blessing. I shall give the reader a short account of their names, and not say much of their fortunes.

Edward, the eldest, was first made Knight of the Bath, at that glorious time of our late Prince Henry's being installed Knight of the Garter ; and after many years' useful travel, and the attainment of many languages, he was by king James sent ambassador resident to the then French king, Lewis the Thirteenth. There he continued about two years ; but he could not subject himself to a compliance with the humors of the Duke de Luines, who was then the great and powerful favorite at court : so that, upon a complaint to our king, he was called back into England in some displeasure ; but at his return he gave such an honorable account of his employment, and so justified his comportment to the duke and all the court, that he was suddenly sent back upon the same embassy, from which he returned in the beginning of the reign of our good King Charles the First, who made him first Baron of Castle-Island, and not long after of Cherbury, in the county of Salop. He was a man of great learning and reason, as appears by his printed book " *De Veritate*," and by his " *History of the Reign of King Henry the Eighth*," and by several other tracts.

The second and third brothers were Richard and William, who ventured their lives to purchase honor in the wars of the Low Countries, and died officers in that employment. Charles was

the fourth, and died fellow of New College in Oxford. Henry was the sixth, who became a menial servant to the Crown in the days of King James, and hath continued to be so for fifty years; during all which time he hath been Master of the Revels; a place that requires a diligent wisdom, with which God hath blessed him. The seventh son was Thomas, who, being made captain of a ship in that fleet with which Sir Robert Mansell was sent against Algiers, did there show a fortunate and true English valor. Of the three sisters I need not say more, than that they were all married to persons of worth and plentiful fortunes; and lived to be examples of virtue, and to do good in their generations.

I now come to give my intended account of George, who was the fifth of those seven brothers.

George Herbert spent much of his childhood in a sweet content under the eye and care of his prudent mother, and the tuition of a chaplain or tutor to him and two of his brothers, in her own family (for she was then a widow), where he continued till about the age of twelve years; and being at that time well instructed in the rules of grammar, he was not long after commended to the care of Dr. Neale, who was then Dean of Westminster, and by him to the care of Mr. Ireland, who was then chief master of that school; where the beauties of his pretty behaviour and wit shined and became

so eminent and lovely in this his innocent age, that he seemed to be marked out for piety, and to become the care of Heaven, and of a particular good angel to guard and guide him. And thus he continued in that school, till he came to be perfect in the learned languages, and especially in the Greek tongue, in which he after proved an excellent critic.

About the age of fifteen (he being then a king's scholar) he was elected out of that school for Trinity College in Cambridge, to which place he was transplanted about the year 1608 ; and his prudent mother, well knowing that he might easily lose or lessen that virtue and innocence, which her advice and example had planted in his mind, did therefore procure the generous and liberal Dr. Nevil, who was then Dean of Canterbury, and Master of that College, to take him into his particular care, and provide him a tutor ; which he did most gladly undertake ; for he knew the excellences of his mother, and how to value such a friendship.

This was the method of his education, till he was settled in Cambridge, where we will leave him in his study, till I have paid my promised account of his excellent mother, and I will endeavour to make it short.

I have told her birth, her marriage, and the number of her children, and have given some

short account of them ; I shall next tell the reader, that her husband died when our George was about the age of four years: I am next to tell that she continued twelve years a widow ; that she then married happily to a noble gentleman, the brother and heir of the Lord Danvers, Earl of Danby, who did highly value both her person and the most excellent endowments of her mind.

In this time of her widowhood, she being desirous to give Edward, her eldest son, such advantages of learning and other education as might suit his birth and fortune, and thereby make him the more fit for the service of his country, did at his being of a fit age remove from Montgomery Castle with him, and some of her younger sons, to Oxford ; and having entered Edward into Queen's College, and provided him a fit tutor, she commended him to his care ; yet she continued there with him, and still kept him in a moderate awe of herself, and so much under her own eye, as to see and converse with him daily : but she managed this power over him without any such rigid sourness, as might make her company a torment to her child, but with such a sweetness and compliance with the recreations and pleasures of youth, as did incline him willingly to spend much of his time in the company of his dear and careful mother ; which was to her great content : for she would often say, " that, as our bodies take a nourish-

ment suitable to the meat on which we feed, so our souls do as insensibly take in vice by the example or conversation with wicked company : ” and would therefore as often say, “ that ignorance of vice was the best preservation of virtue ; and that the very knowledge of wickedness was as tinder to inflame and kindle sin, and to keep it burning.” For these reasons she endeared him to her own company, and continued with him in Oxford four years ; in which time her great and harmless wit, her cheerful gravity, and her obliging behaviour, gained her an acquaintance and friendship with most of any eminent worth or learning that were at that time in or near that university ; and particularly with Mr. John Donne, who then came accidentally to that place in this time of her being there. It was that John Donne who was after Dr. Donne, and Dean of St. Paul’s, London ; and he, at his leaving Oxford, writ and left there, in verse, a character of the beauties of her body and mind. Of the first he says,

“ No spring nor summer beauty hath such grace,  
As I have seen in an autumnal face.”

Of the latter he says,

“ In all her words to every hearer fit,  
You may at revels, or at council sit.”



The rest of her character may be read in his printed poems, in that elegy which bears the name of "The Autumnal Beauty." For both he and she were then past the meridian of man's life.

This amity, begun at this time and place, was not an amity that polluted their souls; but an amity made up of a chain of suitable inclinations and virtues; an amity like that of St. Chrysostom's to his dear and virtuous Olympias, whom, in his letters, he calls his Saint; or an amity, indeed, more like that of St. Hierom to his Paula, whose affection to her was such, that he turned poet in his old age, and then made her epitaph; wishing all his body were turned into tongues, that he might declare her just praises to posterity. And this amity betwixt her and Mr. Donne was begun in a happy time for him, he being then near to the fortieth year of his age (which was some years before he entered into sacred orders); a time when his necessities needed a daily supply for the support of his wife, seven children, and a family. And in this time she proved one of his most bountiful benefactors; and he as grateful an acknowledger of it. You may take one testimony for what I have said of these two worthy persons, from this following letter and sonnet.



“MADAM,

“Your favors to me are every where; I use them, and have them. I enjoy them at London, and leave them there; and yet find them at Micham. Such riddles as these become things inexpressible; and such is your goodness. I was almost sorry to find your servant here this day, because I was loth to have any witness of my not coming home last night, and indeed of my coming this morning. But my not coming was excusable, because earnest business detained me; and my coming this day is by the example of your St. Mary Magdalen, who rose early upon Sunday, to seek that which she loved most; and so did I. And, from her and myself, I return such thanks as are due to one to whom we owe all the good opinion, that they whom we need most have of us. By this messenger, and on this good day, I commit the inclosed holy hymns and sonnets (which for the matter, not the workmanship, have yet escaped the fire) to your judgment, and to your protection too, if you think them worthy of it; and I have appointed this inclosed sonnet to usher them to your happy hand.

“Your unworthiest servant,

“Unless your accepting him to be so

“Have mended him,

“MICHAM, July 11, 1607. JO. DONNE.”

“TO THE LADY MAGDALEN HERBERT ; OF ST. MARY  
MAGDALEN.

“Her of your name, whose fair inheritance  
Bethina was, and jointure Magdalo ;  
An active faith so highly did advance,  
That she once knew more than the Church did  
know,  
The resurrection ; so much good there is  
Delivered of her, that some Fathers be  
Loth to believe one woman could do this,  
But think these Magdalens were two or three.  
Increase their number, Lady, and their fame ;  
To their devotion, add your innocence !  
Take so much of th’ example as of the name ;  
The latter half ; and in some recompense  
That they did harbour Christ himself a guest,  
Harbour these hymns, to his dear name address.  
J. D.”

These hymns are now lost to us ; but doubtless they were such, as they two now sing in heaven.

There might be more demonstrations of the friendship and the many sacred endearments betwixt these two excellent persons (for I have many of their letters in my hand), and much more might be said of her great prudence and piety ; but my design was not to write hers, but the life of her son ; and therefore I shall only tell my reader, that about that very day twenty years that this letter was dated, and sent her, I saw and

heard this Mr. John Donne (who was then Dean of St. Paul's) weep, and preach her funeral sermon, in the parish church of Chelsea, near London, where she now rests in her quiet grave; and where we must now leave her, and return to her son George, whom we left in his study in Cambridge.

And in Cambridge we may find our George Herbert's behaviour to be such, that we may conclude, he consecrated the first-fruits of his early age to virtue, and a serious study of learning. And that he did so, this following letter and sonnet, which were in the first year of his going to Cambridge sent his dear mother for a new-year's gift, may appear to be some testimony.

—— “But I fear the heat of my late ague hath dried up those springs, by which scholars say the Muses used to take up their habitations. However I need not their help, to reprove the vanity of those many love-poems that are daily writ and consecrated to Venus; nor to bewail that so few are writ, that look towards God and heaven. For my own part, my meaning (dear mother) is in these sonnets, to declare my resolution to be, that my poor abilities in poetry shall be all and ever consecrated to God's glory; and I beg you to receive this as one testimony.”

“ My God, where is that ancient heat towards thee,  
Wherewith whole shoals of martyrs once did burn,  
Besides their other flames ? Doth poetry  
Wear Venus’ livery ? only serve her turn ?  
Why are not sonnets made of thee ? and lays  
Upon thine altar burnt ? Cannot thy love  
Heighten a spirit to sound out thy praise  
As well as any she ? Cannot thy dove  
Outstrip their Cupid easily in flight ?  
Or, since thy ways are deep, and still the same,  
Will not a verse run smooth that bears thy name !  
Why doth that fire, which by thy power and  
might  
Each breast does feel, no braver fuel choose  
Than that, which one day worms may chance re-  
fuse ?  
Sure, Lord, there is enough in thee to dry  
Oceans of ink ; for, as the deluge did  
Cover the earth, so doth thy majesty :  
Each cloud distils thy praise, and doth forbid  
Poets to turn it to another use.  
Roses and lilies speak thee ; and to make  
A pair of cheeks of them is thy abuse.  
Why should I women’s eyes for crystal take ?  
Such poor invention burns in their low mind  
Whose fire is wild, and doth not upward go  
To praise and on thee, Lord, some ink bestow.  
Open the bones, and you shall nothing find  
In the best face but filth ; when, Lord, in thee  
The beauty lies, in the discovery.

G. H.”

This was his resolution at the sending this letter to his dear mother ; about which time, he was in the seventeenth year of his age ; and as he grew older, so he grew in learning, and more and more in favor both with God and man ; insomuch, that in this morning of that short day of his life, he seemed to be marked out for virtue, and to become the care of heaven ; for God still kept his soul in so holy a frame, that he may, and ought to be a pattern of virtue to all posterity, and especially to his brethren of the clergy, of which the reader may expect a more exact account in what will follow.

I need not declare that he was a strict student, because, that he was so, there will be many testimonies in the future part of his life. I shall therefore only tell, that he was made Bachelor of Arts in the year 1611 ; Major Fellow of the College, March 15, 1615 : and that in that year he was also made Master of Arts, he being then in the twenty-second year of his age ; during all which time, all, or the greatest diversion from his study, was the practice of music, in which he became a great master ; and of which he would say, “ that it did relieve his drooping spirits, compose his distracted thoughts, and raised his weary soul so far above the earth, that it gave him an earnest of the joys of heaven before he possessed them.” And it may be noted, that from his first entrance into the col-

lege, the generous Dr. Nevil was a cherisher of his studies, and such a lover of his person, his behaviour, and the excellent endowments of his mind, that he took him often into his own company, by which he confirmed his native gentleness ; and, if during this time he expressed any error, it was that he kept himself too much retired, and at too great a distance with all his inferiors ; and his clothes seemed to prove, that he put too great a value on his parts and parentage.

This may be some account of his disposition and of the employment of his time, till he was Master of Arts, which was Anno 1615 ; and in the year 1619 he was chosen Orator for the university. His two precedent Orators were Sir Robert Nanton and Sir Francis Nethersole : the first was not long after made Secretary of State ; and Sir Francis, not very long after his being Orator, was made Secretary to the Lady Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia. In this place of Orator, our George Herbert continued eight years, and managed it with as becoming and grave a gayety as any had ever before or since his time. For, “ he had acquired great learning, and was blessed with a high fancy, a civil and sharp wit, and with a natural elegance, both in his behaviour, his tongue, and his pen.” Of all which, there might be very many particular evidences, but I will limit myself to the mention of but three.



And the first notable occasion of showing his fitness for this employment of Orator was manifested in a letter to King James, upon the occasion of his sending that university his book, called "Basilicon Doron"; and their Orator was to acknowledge this great honor, and return their gratitude to his Majesty for such a condescension, at the close of which letter he writ,

"Quid Vaticanam Bodleianamque objicis, hospes!  
Unicus est nobis bibliotheca liber."

This letter was writ in such excellent Latin, was so full of conceits, and all the expressions so suited to the genius of the King, that he inquired the Orator's name, and then asked William Earl of Pembroke, if he knew him; whose answer was, "that he knew him very well, and that he was his kinsman; but he loved him more for his learning and virtue, than for that he was of his name and family." At which answer, the King smiled, and asked the Earl leave, "that he might love him too; for he took him to be the jewel of that university."

The next occasion he had and took to show his great abilities was with them, to show also his great affection to that church in which he received his baptism, and of which he professed himself a member; and the occasion was this. There was one Andrew Melvin, a minister of the Scotch

Church, and rector of St. Andrews, who, by a long and constant converse with a discontented part of that clergy which opposed Episcopacy, became at last to be a chief leader of that faction; and had proudly appeared to be so to King James, when he was but king of that nation, who the second year after his coronation in England, convened a part of the bishops and other learned divines of his church, to attend him at Hampton Court, in order to a friendly conference with some dissenting brethren, both of this, and the Church of Scotland: of which Scotch party, Andrew Melvin was one; and he being a man of learning, and inclined to satirical poetry, had scattered many malicious bitter verses against our liturgy, our ceremonies, and our church government; which were by some of that party so magnified for the wit, that they were therefore brought into Westminster School, where Mr. George Herbert then, and often after, made such answers to them, and such reflection on him and his kirk, as might unbeguile any man that was not too deeply pre-engaged in such a quarrel.

But to return to Mr. Melvin at Hampton Court Conference, he there appeared to be a man of an unruly wit, of a strange confidence, of so furious a zeal, and of so ungoverned passions, that his insolence to the King, and others at this conference, lost him both his rectorship of St. Andrews,



and his liberty too : for his former verses, and his present reproaches there used against the church and state, caused him to be committed prisoner to the Tower of London, where he remained very angry for three years. At which time of his commitment, he found the Lady Arabella, an innocent prisoner, there ; and he pleased himself much in sending the next day after his commitment, these two verses to the good lady ; which I will underwrite, because they may give the reader a taste of his others, which were like these :

“ *Causa tibi mecum est communis, carceris, Arabella, tibi causa est, Araque sacra mihi.*”

I shall not trouble my reader with an account of his enlargement from that prison, or his death ; but tell him Mr. Herbert's verses were thought so worthy to be preserved, that Dr. Duport, the learned Dean of Peterborough, hath lately collected and caused many of them to be printed, as an honorable memorial of his friend Mr. George Herbert, and the cause he undertook.

And, in order to my third and last observation of his great abilities, it will be needful to declare, that about this time King James came very often to hunt at Newmarket and Royston, and was almost as often invited to Cambridge, where his entertainment was comedies suited to his pleasant humor ; and where Mr. George Herbert was to

welcome him with gratulations and the applauses of an Orator, which he always performed so well, that he still grew more into the King's favor, insomuch that he had a particular appointment to attend his Majesty at Royston; where, after a discourse with him, his Majesty declared to his kinsman, the Earl of Pembroke, "that he found the orator's learning and wisdom much above his age or wit." The year following, the King appointed to end his progress at Cambridge, and to stay there certain days; at which time he was attended by the great secretary of nature and all learning, Sir Francis Bacon (Lord Verulam), and by the ever memorable and learned Dr. Andrews, Bishop of Winchester, both which did at that time begin a desired friendship with our orator. Upon whom, the first put such a value on his judgment, that he usually desired his approbation before he would expose any of his books to be printed, and thought him so worthy of his friendship, that having translated many of the prophet David's Psalms into English verse, he made George Herbert his patron, by a public dedication of them to him, as the best judge of divine poetry. And for the learned bishop, it is observable, that at that time there fell to be a modest debate betwixt them two about predestination and sanctity of life; of both which the orator did, not long after, send the Bishop some safe and useful apho-

risms, in a long letter, written in Greek ; which letter was so remarkable for the language and reason of it, that after the reading it, the Bishop put it into his bosom, and did often show it to many scholars, both of this and foreign nations ; but did always return it back to the place where he first lodged it, and continued it so near his heart till the last day of his life.

To these, I might add the long and entire friendship betwixt him and Sir Henry Wotton, and Dr. Donne, but I have promised to contract myself, and shall therefore only add one testimony to what is also mentioned in the Life of Dr. Donne ; namely, that a little before his death, he caused many seals to be made, and in them to be engraven the figure of Christ crucified on an anchor (the emblem of hope), and of which Dr. Donne would often say, "*Crux mihi anchora.*" These seals he gave or sent to most of those friends on which he put a value ; and, at Mr. Herbert's death, these verses were found wrapt up with that seal which was by the Doctor given to him :

" When my dear friend could write no more,  
He gave this seal, and so gave o'er.

When winds and waves rise highest, I am sure,  
*This anchor keeps my faith, that me secure.*"

At this time of being Orator, he had learnt to understand the Italian, Spanish, and French tongues very perfectly; hoping, that as his predecessors, so he might in time attain the place of a secretary of state, he being at that time very high in the King's favor; and not meanly valued and loved by the most eminent and most powerful of the court nobility. This, and the love of a court conversation, mixed with a laudable ambition to be something more than he then was, drew him often from Cambridge to attend the King, where-soever the court was, who then gave him a sinecure, which fell into his Majesty's disposal, I think, by the death of the Bishop of St. Asaph. It was the same, that Queen Elizabeth had formerly given to her favorite Sir Philip Sidney; and valued to be worth a hundred and twenty pounds per annum. With this, and his annuity, and the advantage of his college, and of his oratorship, he enjoyed his genteel humor for clothes and court-like company, and seldom looked towards Cambridge, unless the King were there, but then he never failed; and, at other times, left the manage of his Orator's place to his learned friend Mr. Herbert Thorndike, who is now prebendary of Westminster.

I may not omit to tell, that he had often designed to leave the university, and decline all study, which, he thought, did impair his health

for he had a body apt to a consumption, and to fevers, and other infirmities, which he judged were increased by his studies; for he would often say, "he had too thoughtful a wit: a wit, like a penknife in too narrow a sheath, too sharp for his body." But his mother would by no means allow him to leave the university, or to travel; and though he inclined very much to both, yet he would by no means satisfy his own desires at so dear a rate, as to prove an undutiful son to so affectionate a mother; but did always submit to her wisdom. And what I have now said may partly appear in a copy of verses in his printed poems; it is one of those that bear the title of "Affliction"; and it appears to be a pious reflection on God's providence, and some passages of his life, in which he says:

"Whereas my birth and spirit rather took  
The way that takes the town:  
Thou didst betray me to a lingering book,  
And wrap me in a gown:  
I was entangled in a world of strife,  
Before I had the power to change my life.

"Yet, for I threatened oft the siege to raise,  
Not simpering all mine age;  
Thou often didst with academic praise  
Melt and dissolve my rage:  
I took the sweetened pill, till I came where  
I could not go away, nor persevere,

“ Yet lest perchance I should too happy be  
In my unhappiness,  
Turning my purge to food, thou throwest me  
Into more sicknesses.  
Thus doth thy power cross-bias me, not making  
Thine own gifts good, yet me from my ways tak-  
ing.

“ Now I am here, what thou wilt do with me  
None of my books will show :  
I read, and sigh, and wish I were a tree,  
For then sure I should grow  
To fruit or shade, at least, some bird would trust  
Her household with me, and I would be just.

“ Yet though thou troublest me, I must be meek,  
In weakness must be stout :  
Well, I will change my service and go seek  
Some other master out :  
Ah ! my dear God, though I am clean forgot,  
Let me not love thee, if I love thee not.

G. H.”

In this time of Mr. Herbert's attendance and expectation of some good occasion to remove from Cambridge to court, God, in whom there is an unseen chain of causes, did, in a short time, put an end to the lives of two of his most obliging and most powerful friends, Lodowick Duke of Richmond, and James Marquis of Hamilton ; and not long after him, King James died also, and with them, all Mr. Herbert's court hopes : so that



he presently betook himself to a retreat from London, to a friend in Kent, where he lived very privately, and was such a lover of solitariness, as was judged to impair his health more than his study had done. In this time of retirement, he had many conflicts with himself, whether he should return to the painted pleasures of a court-life, or betake himself to a study of divinity, and enter into sacred orders? (to which his dear mother had often persuaded him.) — These were such conflicts, as they only can know, that have endured them; for ambitious desires, and the outward glory of this world, are not easily laid aside; but, at last, God inclined him to put on a resolution to serve at his altar.

He did, at his return to London, acquaint a court friend with his resolution to enter into sacred orders, who persuaded him to alter it, as too mean an employment, and too much below his birth, and the excellent abilities and endowments of his mind. To whom he replied, “It hath been formerly judged that the domestic servants of the King of heaven should be of the noblest families on earth: and though the iniquity of the late times have made clergymen meanly valued, and the sacred name of priest contemptible; yet I will labor to make it honorable, by consecrating all my learning, and all my poor abilities, to advance the glory of that God that gave them;

knowing that I can never do too much for Him that hath done so much for me, as to make me a Christian. And I will labor to be like my Saviour, by making humility lovely in the eyes of all men, and by following the merciful and meek example of my dear Jesus."

This was then his resolution, and the God of constancy, who intended him for a great example of virtue, continued him in it; for within that year he was made deacon, but the day when, or by whom, I cannot learn: but that he was about that time made deacon is most certain; for I find by the records of Lincoln, that he was made Prebendary of Layton Ecclesia, in the diocese of Lincoln, July 15, 1626; and that this prebend was given him by John, then Lord Bishop of that see. And now he had a fit occasion to show that piety and bounty that was derived from his generous mother, and his other memorable ancestors, and the occasion was this.

This Layton Ecclesia is a village near to Spalden, in the county of Huntingdon, and the greatest part of the parish church was fallen down, and that of it which stood was so decayed, so little, and so useless, that the parishioners could not meet to perform their duty to God in public prayer and praises; and thus it had been for almost twenty years, in which time there had been some faint endeavours for a public collection, to



enable the parishioners to rebuild it, but with no success, till Mr. Herbert undertook it; and he by his own and the contribution of many of his kindred, and other noble friends, undertook the re-edification of it, and made it so much his whole business, that he became restless till he saw it finished as it now stands: being for the workmanship a costly Mosaic; for the form an exact cross; and for the decency and beauty, I am assured, it is the most remarkable parish church that this nation affords. He lived to see it so wainscotted, as to be exceeded by none; and, by his order, the reading pew and pulpit were a little distant from each other, and both of an equal height: for he would often say, "They should neither have a precedency or priority of the other; but that prayer and preaching, being equally useful, might agree like brethren, and have an equal honor and estimation."

Before I proceed farther, I must look back to the time of Mr. Herbert's being made prebendary, and tell the reader, that not long after, his mother being informed of his intentions to rebuild that church, and apprehending the great trouble and charge that he was likely to draw upon himself, his relations and friends, before it could be finished, sent for him from London to Chelsea (where she then dwelt), and at his coming said, "George, I sent for you to persuade you to commit Simony,

by giving your patron as good a gift as he has given to you ; namely, that you give him back his prebend : for, George, it is not for your weak body and empty purse to undertake to build churches." Of which he desired he might have a day to consider, and then make her an answer. And at his return to her the next day, when he had first desired her blessing, and she given it to him, his next request was, " that she would at the age of thirty-three years allow him to become an undutiful son ; for he had made a vow to God, that if he were able, he would rebuild that church : " and then showed her such reasons for his resolution, that she presently subscribed to be one of his benefactors ; and undertook to solicit William Earl of Pembroke to become another, who subscribed for fifty pounds ; and not long after, by a witty and persuasive letter from Mr. Herbert, made it fifty pounds more. And in this nomination of some of his benefactors, James Duke of Lenox, and his brother Sir Henry Herbert, ought to be remembered ; as, also, the bounty of Mr. Nicholas Farrer and Mr. Arthur Woodnot, the one a gentleman in the neighbourhood of Layton, and the other a goldsmith in Foster-lane, London, ought not to be forgotten ; for the memory of such men ought to outlive their lives. Of Mr. Farrer I shall hereafter give an account in a more seasonable place ; but before I proceed farther I

will give this short account of Mr. Arthur Woodnot :

He was a man that had considered overgrown estates do often require more care and watchfulness to preserve than get them ; and considered that there be many discontents that riches cure not ; and did therefore set limits to himself as to desire of wealth : and having attained so much as to be able to show some mercy to the poor, and preserve a competence for himself, he dedicated the remaining part of his life to the service of God, and to be useful for his friends : and he proved to be so to Mr. Herbert ; for, beside his own bounty, he collected and returned most of the money that was paid for the rebuilding of that church ; he kept all the account of the charges, and would often go down to state them, and see all the workmen paid. When I have said, that this good man was a useful friend to Mr. Herbert's father, and to his mother, and continued to be so to him, till he closed his eyes on his death-bed, I will forbear to say more, till I have the next fair occasion to mention the holy friendship that was betwixt him and Mr. Herbert ; from whom Mr. Woodnot carried to his mother this following letter, and delivered it to her in a sickness, which was not long before that which proved to be her last.

A LETTER OF MR. GEORGE HERBERT TO HIS MOTHER,  
IN HER SICKNESS.

“MADAM,

“At my last parting from you, I was the better content because I was in hope I should myself carry all sickness out of your family; but since I know I did not, and that your share continues, or rather increaseth, I wish earnestly that I were again with you; and would quickly make good my wish, but that my employment does fix me here, it being now but a month to our commencement: wherein my absence, by how much it naturally augmenteth suspicion, by so much shall it make my prayers the more constant and the more earnest for you to the God of all consolation. In the mean time, I beseech you to be cheerful, and comfort yourself in the God of all comfort, who is not willing to behold any sorrow but for sin. What hath affliction grievous in it more than for a moment? or why should our afflictions here have so much power or boldness as to oppose the hope of our joys hereafter? — Madam, as the earth is but a point in respect of the heavens, so are earthly troubles compared to heavenly joys: therefore, if either age or sickness lead you to those joys, consider what advantage you have over youth and health, who are now so near those true comforts. Your last letter gave me earthly preferment, and, I hope, kept heavenly for yourself. But would

you divide and choose too ? our college customs allow not that ; and I should account myself most happy if I might change with you : for I have always observed the thread of life to be like other threads or skeins of silk, full of snarls and incumbrances : happy is he, whose bottom is wound up and laid ready for work in the New Jerusalem. For myself, dear mother, I always feared sickness more than death ; because sickness hath made me unable to perform those offices for which I came into the world, and must yet be kept in it ; but you are freed from that fear, who have already abundantly discharged that part, having both ordered your family, and so brought up your children that they have attained to the years of discretion, and competent maintenance. So that now, if they do not well, the fault cannot be charged on you, whose example and care of them will justify you both to the world and your own conscience : insomuch, that whether you turn your thoughts on the life past, or on the joys that are to come, you have strong preservatives against all disquiet. And for temporal afflictions, I beseech you consider, all that can happen to you are either afflictions of estate, or body, or mind. For those of estate, of what poor regard ought they to be, since, if we had riches, we are commanded to give them away ? so that the best use of them is, having, not to have them. But, perhaps, be-

ing above the common people, our credit and estimation calls on us to live in a more splendid fashion. But, O God ! how easily is that answered, when we consider that the blessings in the holy Scripture are never given to the rich, but to the poor. I never find ‘Blessed be the rich,’ or ‘Blessed be the noble’ ; but ‘Blessed be the meek,’ and ‘Blessed be the poor,’ and ‘Blessed be the mourners, for they shall be comforted.’ And yet, O God ! most carry themselves so, as if they not only not desired, but even feared to be blessed. And for afflictions of the body, dear Madam, remember the holy martyrs of God, how they have been burnt by thousands, and have endured such other tortures, as the very mention of them might beget amazement ; but their fiery trials have had an end : and yours (which, praised be God, are less) are not like to continue long. I beseech you, let such thoughts as these moderate your present fear and sorrow ; and know, that if any of yours should prove a Goliath-like trouble, yet you may say with David, ‘That God, who delivered me out of the paws of the lion and bear, will also deliver me out of the hands of this uncircumcised Philistine.’ Lastly, for those afflictions of the soul, consider that God intends that to be as a sacred temple for himself to dwell in, and will not allow any room there for such an inmate as grief, or allow that any sadness shall be his competitor. And,



above all, if any care of future things molest you, remember those admirable words of the Psalmist : ' Cast thy care on the Lord, and he shall nourish thee,' Psal. lv. To which join that of St. Peter, ' Casting all your care on the Lord, for he careth for you,' 1 Pet. v. 7. What an admirable thing is this, that God puts his shoulder to our burden, and entertains our care for us, that we may the more quietly intend his service. To conclude, let me commend only one place more to you, (Philip. iv. 4.) ; St. Paul saith there, ' Rejoice in the Lord always : and again I say, Rejoice.' He doubles it to take away the scruple of those that might say, What, shall we rejoice in afflictions ? Yes, I say again, Rejoice ; so that it is not left to us to rejoice or not rejoice ; but, whatsoever befalls us, we must always, at all times, rejoice in the Lord, who taketh care for us. And it follows in the next verse : ' Let your moderation appear to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing.' What can be said more comfortably ? Trouble not yourselves, God is at hand to deliver us from all, or in all. Dear Madam, pardon my boldness, and accept the good meaning of

Your most obedient son,

GEORGE HERBERT.

TRINITY COLLEGE, May 25, 1622."

About the year 1629, and the 34th of his age, Mr. Herbert was seized with a sharp quotidian ague, and thought to remove it by the change of air; to which end, he went to Woodford in Essex, but thither more chiefly to enjoy the company of his beloved brother Sir Henry Herbert, and other friends then of that family. In his house he remained about twelve months, and there became his own physician, and cured himself of his ague, by forbearing drink, and not eating any meat, no not mutton, nor a hen, or pigeon, unless they were salted; and by such a constant diet he removed his ague, but with inconveniences that were worse; for he brought upon himself a disposition to rheums and other weaknesses, and a supposed consumption. And it is to be noted, that in the sharpest of his extreme fits he would often say, “Lord, abate my great affliction, or increase my patience; but, Lord, I repine not; I am dumb, Lord, before thee, because thou doest it.” By which, and a sanctified submission to the will of God, he showed he was inclinable to bear the sweet yoke of Christian discipline, both then and in the latter part of his life, of which there will be many true testimonies.

And now his care was to recover from his consumption by a change from Woodford into such an air as was most proper to that end. And his remove was to Dauntsey in Wiltshire, a noble



house, which stands in a choice air ; the owner of it then was the Lord Danvers Earl of Danby, who loved Mr. Herbert so very much, that he allowed him such an apartment in it as might best suit with his accommodation and liking. And in this place, by a spare diet, declining all perplexing studies, moderate exercise, and a cheerful conversation, his health was apparently improved to a good degree of strength and cheerfulness : and then he declared his resolution, both to marry, and to enter into the sacred orders of priesthood. These had long been the desires of his mother and his other relations ; but she lived not to see either, for she died in the year 1627. And though he was disobedient to her about Layton Church, yet, in conformity to her will, he kept his Orator's place till after her death, and then presently declined it ; and the more willingly, that he might be succeeded by his friend Robert Creighton, who now is Dr. Creighton, and the worthy Bishop of Wells.

I shall now proceed to his marriage ; in order to which, it will be convenient that I first give the reader a short view of his person, and then an account of his wife, and of some circumstances concerning both.

He was, for his person, of a stature inclining towards tallness ; his body was very straight ; and so far from being cumbered with too much flesh,

that he was lean to an extremity. His aspect was cheerful, and his speech and motion did both declare him a gentleman ; for they were all so meek and obliging, that they purchased love and respect from all that knew him.

These, and his other visible virtues, begot him much love from a gentleman, of a noble fortune, and a near kinsman to his friend the Earl of Danby ; namely, from Mr. Charles Danvers of Bainton, in the county of Wilts, Esq. ; this Mr. Danvers, having known him long and familiarly, did so much affect him, that he often and publicly declared a desire that Mr. Herbert would marry any of his nine daughters (for he had so many) ; but rather his daughter Jane than any other, because Jane was his beloved daughter. And he had often said the same to Mr. Herbert himself ; and that if he could like her for a wife, and she him for a husband, Jane should have a double blessing ; and Mr. Danvers had so often said the like to Jane, and so much commended Mr. Herbert to her, that Jane became so much a Platonick, as to fall in love with Mr. Herbert unseen.

This was a fair preparation for a marriage ; but alas, her father died before Mr. Herbert's retirement to Dauntsey ; yet some friends to both parties procured their meeting ; at which time a mutual affection entered into both their hearts, as a conqueror enters into a surprised city, and love

having got such possession governed, and made there such laws and resolutions as neither party was able to resist; insomuch that she changed her name to Herbert the third day after this first interview.

This haste might in others be thought a love-phrenzy, or worse; but it was not, for they had wooed so like princes, as to have select proxies; such as were true friends to both parties; such as well understood Mr. Herbert's and her temper of mind, and also their estates, so well before this interview, that the suddenness was justifiable by the strictest rules of prudence; and the more because it proved so happy to both parties: for the Eternal Lover of mankind made them happy in each other's mutual and equal affections and compliance; indeed so happy, that there never was any opposition betwixt them, unless it were a contest which should most incline to a compliance with the other's desires. And though this begot, and continued in them, such a mutual love, and joy, and content, as was no way defective; yet this mutual content, and love, and joy did receive a daily augmentation, by such daily obligingness to each other, as still added such new affluences to the former fullness of these divine souls, as was only improvable in heaven, where they now enjoy it.

About three months after his marriage, Dr. Curle, who was then Rector of Bemerton in Wiltshire, was made Bishop of Bath and Wells, and not long after translated to Winchester; and by that means the presentation of a clerk to Bemerton did not fall to the Earl of Pembroke (who was the undoubted patron of it) but to the King, by reason of Dr. Curle's advancement. But Philip, then Earl of Pembroke (for William was lately dead), requested the King to bestow it upon his kinsman George Herbert; and the King said, "Most willingly to Mr. Herbert, if it be worth his acceptance." And the Earl as willingly and suddenly sent it him without seeking. But though Mr. Herbert had formerly put on a resolution for the clergy; yet, at receiving this presentation, the apprehension of the last great account, that he was to make for the cure of so many souls, made him fast and pray often, and consider for not less than a month; in which time he had some resolutions to decline both the priesthood and that living. And in this time of considering, "he endured," as he would often say, "such spiritual conflicts as none can think, but only those that have endured them."

In the midst of those conflicts, his old and dear friend Mr. Arthur Woodnot took a journey to salute him at Bainton (where he then was with his wife's friends and relations), and was joyful to be

an eye-witness of his health and happy marriage. And after they had rejoiced together some few days, they took a journey to Wilton, the famous seat of the Earls of Pembroke ; at which time the King, the Earl, and the whole Court were there, or at Salisbury, which is near to it. And at this time Mr. Herbert presented his thanks to the Earl, for his presentation to Bemerton, but had not yet resolved to accept it, and told him the reason why ; but that night the Earl acquainted Dr. Laud, then Bishop of London, and after Archbishop of Canterbury, with his kinsman's irresolution. And the Bishop did the next day so convince Mr. Herbert, that the refusal of it was a sin, that a tailor was sent for to come speedily from Salisbury to Wilton, to take measure, and make him canonical clothes against next day ; which the tailor did. And Mr. Herbert, being so habited, went with his presentation to the learned Dr. Davenant, who was then Bishop of Salisbury, and he gave him institution immediately (for Mr. Herbert had been made deacon some years before) ; and he was also the same day (which was April 26, 1630) inducted into the good, and more pleasant than healthful, parsonage of Bemerton ; which is a mile from Salisbury.

I have now brought them to the parsonage of Bemerton, and to the thirty-sixth year of his age, and must stop here, and bespeak the reader to

prepare for an almost incredible story of the great sanctity of the short remainder of his holy life ; a life so full of charity, humility, and all Christian virtues, that it deserves the eloquence of St. Chrysostom to commend and declare it ! A life, that if it were related by a pen like his, there would then be no need for this age to look back into times past for the examples of primitive piety ; for they might be all found in the life of George Herbert. But now, alas ! who is fit to undertake it ? I confess I am not ; and am not pleased with myself that I must ; and profess myself amazed, when I consider how few of the clergy lived like him then, and how many live so unlike him now. But it becomes not me to censure : my design is rather to assure the reader, that I have used very great diligence to inform myself, that I might inform him of the truth of what follows ; and though I cannot adorn it with eloquence, yet I will do it with sincerity.

When at his induction he was shut into Bemerton church, being left there alone to toll the bell (as the law requires him), he stayed so much longer than an ordinary time before he returned to those friends that stayed expecting him at the church door, that his friend Mr. Woodnot looked in at the church window, and saw him lie prostrate on the ground before the altar : at which time and place (as he after told Mr. Woodnot) he



set some rules to himself, for the future manage of his life ; and then and there made a vow to labor to keep them.

And the same night that he had his induction, he said to Mr. Woodnot ; “ I now look back upon my aspiring thoughts, and think myself more happy than if I had attained what then I so ambitiously thirsted for : and I can now behold the court with an impartial eye, and see plainly that it is made up of fraud, and titles, and flattery, and many other such empty, imaginary, painted pleasures ; pleasures that are so empty, as not to satisfy when they are enjoyed. But in God and his service is a fullness of all joy and pleasure, and no satiety. And I will now use all my endeavours to bring my relations and dependents to a love and reliance on him, who never fails those that trust him. But above all, I will be sure to live well, because the virtuous life of a clergyman is the most powerful eloquence to persuade all that see it to reverence and love, and at least to desire to live like him. And this I will do, because I know we live in an age that hath more need of good examples than precepts. And I beseech that God, who hath honored me so much as to call me to serve him at his altar, that as by his special grace he hath put into my heart these good desires and resolutions ; so he will, by his assisting grace, give me ghostly strength to bring the same

to good effect. And I beseech him that my humble and charitable life may so win upon others, as to bring glory to my Jesus, whom I have this day taken to be my master and governor : and I am so proud of his service, that I will always observe, and obey, and do his will, and always call him ‘ Jesus, my master ’ ; and I will always condemn my birth, or any title or dignity that can be conferred upon me, when I shall compare them with my title of being a priest, and serving at the altar of Jesus, my master.”

And that he did so may appear in many parts of his “ Book of Sacred Poems ; ” especially in that which he calls “ The Odour.” In which he seems to rejoice in the thoughts of that word, Jesus, and say, that the adding these words, my master, to it, and the often repetition of them seemed to perfume his mind, and leave an oriental fragrancy in his very breath. And for his unforced choice to serve at God’s altar, he seems in another place in his poems ( “ The Pearl,” Mat. xiii.) to rejoice and say, — “ He knew the ways of learning ; knew what nature does willingly ; and what, when it is forced by fire ; knew the ways of honor, and when glory inclines the soul to noble expressions ; knew the court ; knew the ways of pleasure, of love, of wit, of music, and upon what terms he declined all these for the service of his master Jesus ; ” and then concludes, saying,



“That through these labyrinths, not my grovelling  
wit,  
But thy silk-twist, let down from heaven to me,  
Did both conduct, and teach me, how by it  
To climb to thee.”

The third day after he was made Rector of Bemerton, and had changed his sword and silk clothes into a canonical coat, he returned so habited with his friend Mr. Woodnot to Bainton, and immediately after he had seen and saluted his wife, he said to her, — “ You are now a minister’s wife, and must now so far forget your father’s house, as not to claim a precedence of any of your parishioners ; for you are to know, that a priest’s wife can challenge no precedence of place, but that which she purchases by her obliging humility ; and I am sure places so purchased do best become them. And let me tell you, that I am so good a herald as to assure you that this is truth.” And she was so meek a wife as to assure him it was no vexing news to her, and that he should see her observe it with a cheerful willingness. And, indeed, her unforced humility, that humility that was in her so original as to be born with her, made her so happy as to do so ; and her doing so begot her an unfeigned love and a serviceable respect from all that conversed with her ; and this love followed her in all places as inseparably as shadows follow substances in sunshine.

It was not many days before he returned back to Bemerton, to view the church, and repair the chancel ; and indeed to rebuild almost three parts of his house, which was fallen down, or decayed, by reason of his predecessor's living at a better parsonage-house, namely, at Minal, sixteen or twenty miles from this place. At which time of Mr. Herbert's coming alone to Bemerton, there came to him a poor old woman, with an intent to acquaint him with her necessitous condition, as also with some troubles of her mind ; but after she had spoken some few words to him, she was surprised with a fear, and that begot a shortness of breath, so that her spirits and speech failed her ; which he perceiving, did so compassionate her, and was so humble, that he took her by the hand, and said, " Speak, good mother, be not afraid to speak to me ; for I am a man that will hear you with patience ; and will relieve your necessities too, if I be able ; and this I will do willingly ; and therefore, mother, be not afraid to acquaint me with what you desire." After which comfortable speech, he again took her by the hand, made her sit down by him, and understanding she was of his parish, he told her " he would be acquainted with her, and take her into his care : " and having with patience heard and understood her wants (and it is some relief for a poor body to be but heard with patience), he, like a Christian

clergyman, comforted her by his meek behaviour and counsel ; but because that cost him nothing, he relieved her with money too, and so sent her home with a cheerful heart, praising God and praying for him. Thus worthy and (like David's blessed man) thus lowly was Mr. George Herbert in his own eyes, and thus lovely in the eyes of others.

At his return that night to his wife at Bainton, he gave her an account of the passages betwixt him and the poor woman ; with which she was so affected that she went next day to Salisbury, and there bought a pair of blankets, and sent them as a token of her love to the poor woman ; and with them a message, " that she would see and be acquainted with her when her house was built at Bemerton."

There be many such passages both of him and his wife, of which some few will be related ; but I shall first tell that he hasted to get the parish church repaired ; then to beautify the chapel (which stands near his house), and that at his own great charge. He then proceeded to rebuild the greatest part of the parsonage-house, which he did also very completely, and at his own charge ; and having done this good work, he caused these verses to be writ upon, or engraven in, the mantel of the chimney in his hall :

## TO MY SUCCESSOR.

“If thou chance for to find  
A new house to thy mind,  
And built without thy cost :  
Be good to the poor,  
As God gives thee store,  
And then my labor 's not lost.”

We will now, by the reader's favor, suppose him fixed at Bemerton, and grant him to have seen the church repaired, and the chapel belonging to it very decently adorned, at his own great charge (which is a real truth) ; and having now fixed him there, I shall proceed to give an account of the rest of his behaviour both to his parishioners, and those many others that knew and conversed with him.

Doubtless Mr. Herbert had considered and given rules to himself for his Christian carriage both to God and man, before he entered into holy orders. And it is not unlike, but that he renewed those resolutions at his prostration before the holy altar, at his induction into the church of Bemerton ; but as yet he was but a deacon, and therefore longed for the next Ember-week, that he might be ordained priest, and made capable of administering both the sacraments. At which time the Rev. Dr. Humphrey Henchman, now Lord Bishop of London (who does not mention him but with some veneration for his life and ex-

cellent learning), tells me, "he laid his hand on Mr. Herbert's head, and alas ! within less than three years, lent his shoulder to carry his dear friend to his grave."

And that Mr. Herbert might the better preserve those holy rules which such a priest, as he intended to be, ought to observe ; and that time might not insensibly blot them out of his memory, but that the next year might show him his variations from this year's resolutions ; he, therefore, did set down his rules, then resolved upon, in that order as the world now sees them printed in a little book called "The Country Parson" ; in which some of his rules are :

"The Parson's knowledge.  
The Parson on Sundays.  
The Parson praying.  
The Parson preaching.  
The Parson's charity.  
The Parson comforting the sick.  
The Parson arguing.  
The Parson condescending.  
The Parson in his journey.  
The Parson in his mirth.  
The Parson with his churchwardens.  
The Parson blessing the people."

And his behaviour toward God and man may be said to be a practical comment on these and the other holy rules set down in that useful book ;

a book so full of plain, prudent, and useful rules, that that country parson, that can spare twelve pence, and yet wants it, is scarce excusable ; because it will both direct him what he ought to do, and convince him for not having done it.

At the death of Mr. Herbert, this book fell into the hands of his friend Mr. Woodnot ; and he commended it into the trusty hands of Mr. Barnabas Oley, who published it with a most conscientious and excellent Preface ; from which I have had some of those truths, that are related in this Life of Mr. Herbert. The text for his first sermon was taken out of Solomon's Proverbs, and the words were, "Keep thy heart with all diligence." In which first sermon he gave his parishioners many necessary, holy, safe rules for the discharge of a good conscience both to God and man ; and delivered his sermon after a most florid manner, both with great learning and eloquence ; but, at the close of this sermon, told them, "that should not be his constant way of preaching ; for since Almighty God does not intend to lead men to heaven by hard questions, he would not therefore fill their heads with unnecessary notions ; but that, for their sakes, his language and his expressions should be more plain and practical in his future sermons." And he then made it his humble request, "that they would be constant to the afternoon's service and



catechizing ; ” and showed them convincing reasons why he desired it ; and his obliging example and persuasions brought them to a willing conformity to his desires.

The texts for all his future sermons (which God knows were not many) were constantly taken out of the gospel for the day ; and he did as constantly declare why the Church did appoint that portion of Scripture to be that day read ; and in what manner the collect for every Sunday does refer to the gospel or to the epistle then read to them ; and, that they might pray with understanding, he did usually take occasion to explain, not only the collect for every particular Sunday, but the reasons of all the other collects and responses in our church-service ; and made it appear to them, that the whole service of the church was a reasonable, and therefore an acceptable sacrifice to God : as namely, that we begin with confession “ of ourselves to be vile, miserable sinners ; ” and that we begin so, because till we have confessed ourselves to be such, we are not capable of that mercy which we acknowledge we need and pray for : but having, in the prayer of our Lord, begged pardon for those sins which we have confessed ; and hoping that, as the priest hath declared our absolution, so by our public confession, and real repentance, we have obtained that pardon ; then we dare and do proceed to beg of the Lord,

“to open our lips, that our mouths may show forth his praise :” for, till then, we are neither able nor worthy to praise him. But this being supposed, we are then fit to say, “Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost ;” and fit to proceed to a further service of our God, in the collects, and psalms, and lauds, that follow in the service.

And as to these psalms and lauds, he proceeded to inform them, why they were so often, and some of them daily, repeated in our church-service ; namely, the psalms every month, because they be an historical and thankful repetition of mercies past ; and such a composition of prayers and praises as ought to be repeated often and publicly, for “with such sacrifices God is honored and well pleased.” This for the psalms.

And for the hymns and lauds, appointed to be daily repeated or sung after the first and second lessons are read to the congregation ; he proceeded to inform them, that it was most reasonable, after they have heard the will and goodness of God declared or preached by the priest in his reading the two chapters, that it was then a seasonable duty to rise up and express their gratitude to Almighty God for those his mercies to them, and to all mankind ; and then to say with the blessed Virgin, that their “souls do magnify the Lord, and that their spirits do also rejoice in God



their Saviour." And that it was their duty also to rejoice with Simeon in his song, and say with him, that their "eyes have" also "seen their salvation;" for they have seen that salvation which was but prophesied till his time: and he then broke out into those expressions of joy that he did see it; but they lived to see it daily in the history of it, and, therefore, ought daily to rejoice, and daily to offer up their sacrifices of praise to their God for that particular mercy, — a service which is now the constant employment of that blessed Virgin and Simeon, and all those blessed saints that are possessed of heaven; and where they are at this time interchangeably and constantly singing, "Holy, holy, holy Lord God; glory be to God on high, and on earth peace." And he taught them, that to do this was an acceptable service to God; because the prophet David says, in his Psalms, "He that praiseth the Lord, honoreth him."

He made them to understand how happy they be that are freed from the incumbrances of that law which our forefathers groaned under; namely, from the legal sacrifices, and from the many ceremonies of the Levitical law; freed from circumcision, and from the strict observation of the Jewish Sabbath, and the like. And he made them know, that having received so many and so great blessings, by being born since the days of

our Saviour, it must be an acceptable sacrifice to Almighty God for them to acknowledge those blessings daily, and stand up and worship, and say as Zacharias did, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath (in our days) visited and redeemed his people; and (he hath in our days) remembered and showed that mercy which, by the mouth of the prophets, he promised to our forefathers; and this he hath done according to his holy covenant made with them." And he made them to understand that we live to see and enjoy the benefit of it in his birth, in his life, his passion, his resurrection, and ascension into heaven, where he now sits sensible of all our temptations and infirmities; and where he is at this present time making intercession for us, to his, and our Father; and therefore they ought daily to express their public gratulations, and say daily with Zacharias, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, that hath thus visited, and thus redeemed his people." These were some of the reasons by which Mr. Herbert instructed his congregation for the use of the psalms and the hymns appointed to be daily sung or said in the church-service.

He informed them also, when the priest did pray only for the congregation and not for himself; and when they did only pray for him, as namely, after the repetition of the creed, before he proceeds to pray the Lord's prayer, or any of

the appointed collects, the priest is directed to kneel down, and pray for them, saying, "The Lord be with you;" and when they pray for him, saying, "And with thy spirit;" and then they join together in the following collects; and he assured them, that when there is such mutual love, and such joint prayers offered for each other, then the holy angels look down from heaven, and are ready to carry such charitable desires to God Almighty, and he as ready to receive them; and that a Christian congregation calling thus upon God, with one heart and one voice, and in one reverent and humble posture, look as beautifully as Jerusalem, that is at peace with itself.

He instructed them also why the prayer of our Lord was prayed often in every full service of the church; namely, at the conclusion of the several parts of that service; and prayed then, not only because it was composed and commanded by our Jesus that made it, but as a perfect pattern for our less perfect forms of prayer, and therefore fittest to sum up and conclude all our imperfect petitions.

He instructed them also that as by the second commandment we are required not to bow down or worship an idol or false god; so, by the contrary rule, we are to bow down and kneel, or stand up and worship the true God. And he instructed them why the Church required the con-

gregation to stand up at the repetition of the creeds; namely, because they did thereby declare both their obedience to the Church, and an assent to that faith into which they had been baptized. And he taught them, that in that shorter creed or doxology so often repeated daily, they also stood up to testify their belief to be, that "the God that they trusted in was one God and three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to whom they and the priest gave glory." And because there had been heretics that had denied some of those three persons to be God; therefore the congregation stood up and honored him, by confessing and saying, "It was so in the beginning, is now so, and shall ever be so, world without end." And all gave their assent to this belief, by standing up and saying, "Amen."

He instructed them also what benefit they had by the Church's appointing the celebration of holydays, and the excellent use of them; namely, that they were set apart for particular commemorations of particular mercies received from Almighty God; and (as Rev. Mr. Hooker says) "to be the landmarks to distinguish times:" for by them we are taught to take notice how time passes by us, and that we ought not to let the years pass without a celebration of praise for those mercies which those days give us occasion to remember; and therefore they were to note, that

the year is appointed to begin the 25th day of March, a day in which we commemorate the angel's appearing to the blessed Virgin, with the joyful tidings that "she should conceive and bare a son, that should be the Redeemer of mankind." And she did so forty weeks after this joyful salutation; namely, at our Christmas; a day in which we commemorate his birth with joy and praise: and that eight days after this happy birth we celebrate his circumcision; namely, in that which we call New-year's day. And that, upon that day which we call Twelfth-day, we commemorate the manifestation of the unsearchable riches of Jesus to the Gentiles: and that that day we also celebrate the memory of his goodness in sending a star to guide the three Wise Men from the East to Bethlehem, that they might there worship, and present him with their oblations of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And he (Mr. Herbert) instructed them, that Jesus was forty days after his birth presented by his blessed mother in the Temple; namely, on that day which we call, "The Purification of the blessed Virgin Saint Mary." And he instructed them, that by the Lent-fast we imitate and commemorate our Saviour's humiliation in fasting forty days; and that we ought to endeavour to be like him in purity. And that on Good Friday we commemorate and condole his crucifixion; and at Easter, commemorate his glo-

rious resurrection. And he taught them, that after Jesus had manifested himself to his disciples to be "that Christ that was crucified, dead and buried;" and by his appearing and conversing with his disciples for the space of forty days after his resurrection, he then, and not till then, ascended into heaven in the sight of those disciples; namely, on that day which we call the Ascension, or Holy Thursday. And that we then celebrate the performance of the promise which he made to his disciples at or before his ascension; namely, "That though he left them, yet he would send them the Holy Ghost to be their comforter;" and that he did so on that day which the Church calls Whitsunday. Thus the Church keeps an historical and circular commemoration of times as they pass by us; of such times as ought to incline us to occasional praises for the particular blessings which we do, or might receive by those holy commemorations.

He made them know also why the Church hath appointed Ember-weeks: and to know the reason why the Commandments, and the Epistles and Gospels were to be read at the altar or communion-table; why the priest was to pray the litany kneeling; and why to pray some collects standing; and he gave them many other observations fit for his plain congregation, but not fit for me now to mention, for I must set limits to my pen, and not



make that a treatise which I intended to be a much shorter account than I have made it. But I have done when I have told the reader that he was constant in catechizing every Sunday in the afternoon, and that his catechizing was after his second lesson, and in the pulpit; and that he never exceeded his half hour, and was always so happy as to have an obedient and full congregation.

And to this I must add, that if he were at any time too zealous in his sermons, it was in reprov- ing the indecencies of the people's behaviour in the time of divine service; and of those ministers that huddled up the church prayers without a visible reverence and affection; namely, such as seemed to say the Lord's Prayer or a collect in a breath. But for himself, his custom was to stop betwixt every collect, and give the people time to consider what they had prayed, and to force their desires affectionately to God before he engaged them into new petitions.

And by this account of his diligence to make his parishioners understand what they prayed, and why they praised and adored their Creator, I hope I shall the more easily obtain the reader's belief to the following account of Mr. Herbert's own practice, which was to appear constantly with his wife and three nieces (the daughters of a deceased sister) and his whole family twice every day

at the church prayers in the chapel which does almost join to his parsonage house. And for the time of his appearing, it was strictly at the canonical hours of ten and four; and then and there he lifted up pure and charitable hands to God in the midst of the congregation. And he would joy to have spent that time in that place where the honor of his Master Jesus dwelleth; and there, by that inward devotion which he testified constantly by an humble behaviour and visible adoration, he, like Joshua, brought not only "his own household thus to serve the Lord," but brought most of his parishioners and many gentlemen in the neighbourhood, constantly to make a part of his congregation twice a day. And some of the meaner sort of his parish did so love and reverence Mr. Herbert, that they would let their plough rest when Mr. Herbert's Saint's-bell rung to prayers, that they might also offer their devotions to God with him; and would then return back to their plough. And his most holy life was such, that it begot such reverence to God, and to him, that they thought themselves the happier when they carried Mr. Herbert's blessing back with them to their labor. Thus powerful was his reason and example, to persuade others to a practical piety and devotion.

And his constant public prayers did never make him to neglect his own private devotions, nor



those prayers that he thought himself bound to perform with his family, which always were a set form and not long ; and he did always conclude them with that collect which the Church hath appointed for the day or week. Thus he made every day's sanctity a step towards that kingdom where impurity cannot enter.

His chiefest recreation was music, in which heavenly art he was a most excellent master, and did himself compose many divine hymns and anthems, which he set and sung to his lute or viol. And though he was a lover of retiredness, yet his love to music was such, that he went usually twice every week, on certain appointed days, to the cathedral church in Salisbury ; and at his return would say, "that his time spent in prayer, and cathedral music, elevated his soul, and was his heaven upon earth." But before his return thence to Bemerton, he would usually sing and play his part at an appointed private music meeting ; and, to justify this practice, he would often say, " Religion does not banish mirth, but only moderates and sets rules to it."

And as his desire to enjoy his heaven upon earth drew him twice every week to Salisbury, so his walks thither were the occasion of many happy accidents to others, of which I will mention some few.

In one of his walks to Salisbury, he overtook a gentleman that is still living in that city, and in their walk together Mr. Herbert took a fair occasion to talk with him, and humbly beg to be excused if he asked him some account of his faith; and said, "I do this the rather, because though you are not of my parish, yet I receive tithe from you by the hand of your tenant; and, sir, I am the bolder to do it, because I know there be some sermon-hearers that be like those fishes that always live in salt water, and yet are always fresh." After which expression Mr. Herbert asked him some needful questions, and having received his answer, gave him such rules for the trial of his sincerity, and for a practical piety, and in so loving and meek a manner, that the gentleman did so fall in love with him and his discourse, that he would often contrive to meet him in his walk to Salisbury, or to attend him back to Bemerton, and still mentions the name of Mr. George Herbert with veneration, and still praiseth God for the occasion of knowing him.

In another of his Salisbury walks, he met with a neighbour minister, and after some friendly discourse betwixt them, and some condolment for the decay of piety, and too general contempt of the clergy, Mr. Herbert took occasion to say, "One cure for these distempers, would be for the clergy themselves to keep the Ember-weeks strict-

ly, and beg of their parishioners to join with them in fasting and prayers for a more religious clergy.

“And another cure would be for themselves to restore the great and neglected duty of catechizing, on which the salvation of so many of the poor and ignorant lay-people does depend ; but principally, that the clergy themselves would be sure to live unblamably ; and that the dignified clergy especially, which preach temperance, would avoid surfeiting, and take all occasions to express a visible humility and charity in their lives : for this would force a love, and an imitation, and an unfeigned reverence from all that knew them to be such.” (And for proof of this, we need no other testimony than the life and death of Dr. Lake, late Lord Bishop of Bath and Wells.) “This,” said Mr. Herbert, “would be a cure for the wickedness and growing atheism of our age. And, my dear brother, till this be done by us, and done in earnest, let no man expect a reformation of the manners of the laity ; for it is not learning, but this, this only, that must do it ; and till then the fault must lie at our doors.”

In another walk to Salisbury, he saw a poor man with a poorer horse, that was fallen under his load ; they were both in distress, and needed present help, which Mr. Herbert perceiving, put off his canonical coat, and helped the poor man

to unload, and after, to load his horse. The poor man blessed him for it, and he blessed the poor man ; and was so like the good Samaritan, that he gave him money to refresh both himself and his horse ; and told him, “ that if he loved himself, he should be merciful to his beast.” Thus he left the poor man, and at his coming to his musical friends at Salisbury, they began to wonder that Mr. George Herbert, who used to be so trim and clean, came into that company so soiled and discomposed ; but he told them the occasion. And when one of the company told him “ he had disparaged himself by so dirty an employment ; ” his answer was, “ that the thought of what he had done, would prove music to him at midnight ; and that the omission of it would have upbraided and made discord in his conscience, whensoever he should pass by that place ; for if I be bound to pray for all that be in distress, I am sure that I am bound, so far as it is in my power, to practise what I pray for. And though I do not wish for the like occasion every day, yet let me tell you, I would not willingly pass one day of my life, without comforting a sad soul, or showing mercy ; and I praise God for this occasion. And now let us tune our instruments.”

Thus as our blessed Saviour, after his resurrection, did take occasion to interpret the Scripture to Cleopas and that other disciple which he met

with, and accompanied, in their journey to Emmaus ; so Mr. Herbert, in his path toward heaven, did daily take any fair occasion to instruct the ignorant, or comfort any that were in affliction ; and did always confirm his precepts, by showing humility and mercy, and ministering grace to the hearers.

And he was most happy in his wife's unforced compliance with his acts of charity, whom he made his almoner, and paid constantly into her hand a tenth penny of what money he received for tithe, and gave her power to dispose that to the poor of his parish, and with it a power to dispose a tenth part of the corn that came yearly into his barn : which trust she did most faithfully perform, and would often offer to him an account of her stewardship, and as often beg an enlargement of his bounty ; for she rejoiced in the employment : and this was usually laid out by her in blankets and shoes for some such poor people, as she knew to stand in most need of them. This as to her charity. And for his own, he set no limits to it ; nor did ever turn his face from any that he saw in want, but would relieve them, especially his poor neighbours ; to the meanest of whose houses he would go and inform himself of their wants, and relieve them cheerfully if they were in distress ; and would always praise God, as much for being willing, as for being able to do

it. And when he was advised by a friend to be more frugal, because he might have children, his answer was, "he would not see the danger of want so far off; but, being the Scripture does so commend charity, as to tell us, that charity is the top of Christian virtues, the covering of sins, the fulfilling of the law, the life of faith; and that charity hath a promise of the blessings of this life, and of a reward in that life which is to come; being these and more excellent things are in Scripture spoken of thee, O Charity! and that being all my tithes and church-dues are a deodate from thee, O my God, make me, O my God, so far to trust thy promise, as to return them back to thee; and by thy grace I will do so, in distributing them to any of thy poor members that are in distress, or do but bear the image of Jesus, my Master. Sir," said he to his friend, "my wife hath a competent maintenance secured her after my death, and therefore as this is my prayer, so this my resolution shall, by God's grace, be unalterable."

This may be some account of the excellencies of the active part of his life; and thus he continued, till a consumption so weakened him, as to confine him to his house, or to the chapel, which does almost join to it; in which he continued to read prayers constantly twice every day, though he were very weak: in one of which times of his reading his wife observed him to read in pain,



and told him so, and that it wasted his spirits, and weakened him; and he confessed it did, but said, "his life could not be better spent, than in the service of his Master Jesus, who had done and suffered so much for him. "But," said he, "I will not be wilful; for though my spirit be willing, yet I find my flesh is weak; and therefore Mr. Bostock shall be appointed to read prayers for me to-morrow, and I will now be only a hearer of them, till this mortal shall put on immortality." And Mr. Bostock did the next day undertake and continue this happy employment, till Mr. Herbert's death. This Mr. Bostock was a learned and virtuous man, an old friend <sup>of</sup> Mr. Herbert's, and then his curate to the church of Fulston, which is a mile from Bemerton, to which church Bemerton is but a chapel of ease. And this Mr. Bostock did also constantly supply the church service for Mr. Herbert in that chapel, when the music meeting at Salisbury caused his absence from it.

About one month before his death, his friend Mr. Ferrar (for an account of whom I am by promise indebted to the reader, and intend to make him sudden payment) hearing of Mr. Herbert's sickness, sent Mr. Edmund Duncon (who is now Rector of Fryer Barnet, in the county of Middlesex) from his house of Gidden Hall, which is near to Huntingdon, to see Mr. Herbert, and



to assure him, he wanted not his daily prayers for his recovery ; and Mr. Duncon was to return back to Gidden, with an account of Mr. Herbert's condition. Mr. Duncon found him weak, and at that time lying on his bed, or on a pallet ; but at his seeing Mr. Duncon, he raised himself vigorously, saluted him, and with some earnestness inquired the health of his brother Ferrar ; of which Mr. Duncon satisfied him ; and after some discourse of Mr. Ferrar's holy life, and the manner of his constant serving God, he said to Mr. Duncon, " Sir, I see by your habit that you are a priest, and I desire you to pray with me ; " which being granted, Mr. Duncon asked him, " What prayers ? " to which Mr. Herbert's answer was, " O, sir, the prayers of my mother, the Church of England ; no other prayers are equal to them ! but at this time, I beg of you to pray only the Litany, for I am weak and faint ; " and Mr. Duncon did so. After which, and some other discourse of Mr. Ferrar, Mrs. Herbert provided Mr. Duncon a plain supper and a clean lodging, and he betook himself to rest. This Mr. Duncon tells me ; and tells me, that at his first view of Mr. Herbert he saw majesty and humility so reconciled in his looks and behaviour, as begot in him an awful reverence for his person ; and says, " his discourse was so pious, and his motion so gentle and meek, that after almost forty years yet they remain still fresh in his memory."

The next morning, Mr. Duncon left him, and betook himself to a journey to Bath, but with a promise to return back to him within five days, and he did so; but before I shall say any thing of what discourse then fell betwixt them two, I will pay my promised account of Mr. Ferrar.

Mr. Nicholas Ferrar (who got the reputation of being called "St. Nicholas" at the age of six years) was born in London, and doubtless had good education in his youth; but certainly was at an early age made Fellow of Clare Hall in Cambridge; where he continued to be eminent for his piety, temperance, and learning. About the twenty-sixth year of his age he betook himself to travel; in which he added to his Latin and Greek a perfect knowledge of all the languages spoken in the western parts of our Christian world, and understood well the principles of their religion, and of their manner, and the reasons of their worship. In this his travel he met with many persuasions to come into a communion with that church which calls itself Catholic; but he returned from his travels as he went, eminent for his obedience to his mother, the Church of England. In his absence from England, Mr. Ferrar's father (who was a merchant) allowed him a liberal maintenance; and, not long after his return into England, Mr. Ferrar had, by the death of his father, or an elder brother, or both, an estate left

him, that enabled him to purchase land to the value of four or five hundred pounds a year, the greatest part of which land was at Little Gidden, four or six miles from Huntingdon, and about eighteen from Cambridge ; which place he chose for the privacy of it, and for the hall, which had the parish-church or chapel belonging and adjoining near to it ; for Mr. Ferrar having seen the manners and vanities of the world, and found them to be, as Mr. Herbert says, “ a nothing between two dishes,” did so condemn it, that he resolved to spend the remainder of his life in mortifications, and in devotion, and charity, and to be always prepared for death ; and his life was spent thus :

He and his family, which were like a little college, and about thirty in number, did most of them keep Lent and all Ember-weeks strictly, both in fasting and using all those mortifications and prayers that the Church hath appointed to be then used : and he and they did the like constantly on Fridays, and on the vigils or eves appointed to be fasted before the Saints'-days ; and this frugality and abstinence turned to the relief of the poor : but this was but a part of his charity ; none but God and he knew the rest.

This family, which I have said to be in number about thirty, were a part of them his kindred, and the rest chosen to be of a temper fit to be moulded into a devout life ; and all of them were for

their dispositions serviceable and quiet, and humble and free from scandal. Having thus fitted himself for his family, he did, about the year 1630, betake himself to a constant and methodical service of God, and it was in this manner : — He, being accompanied with most of his family, did himself use to read the common prayers (for he was a deacon) every day, at the appointed hours of ten and four, in the parish church, which was very near his house, and which he had both repaired and adorned ; for it was fallen into a great ruin, by reason of a depopulation of the village, before Mr. Ferrar bought the manor. And he did also constantly read the matins every morning at the hour of six, either in the church, or in an oratory, which was within his own house ; and many of the family did there continue with him after the prayers were ended, and there they spent some hours in singing hymns or anthems, sometimes in the church, and often to an organ in the oratory. And there they sometimes betook themselves to meditate, or to pray privately, or to read a part of the New Testament to themselves, or to continue their praying or reading the Psalms ; and, in case the Psalms were not always read in the day, then Mr. Ferrar, and others of the congregation, did at night, at the ring of a watch-bell, repair to the church or oratory, and there betake themselves to prayers and lauding God,

and reading the Psalms that had not been read in the day ; and when these, or any part of the congregation, grew weary or faint, the watch-bell was rung, sometimes before and sometimes after midnight, and then another part of the family rose, and maintained the watch, sometimes by praying or singing lauds to God or reading the Psalms : and when after some hours they also grew weary or faint, then they rung the watch-bell, and were also relieved by some of the former, or by a new part of the society, which continued their devotions (as hath been mentioned) until morning. And it is to be noted, that in this continued serving of God, the Psalter, or whole Book of Psalms, was in every four and twenty hours sung or read over, from the first to the last verse ; and this was done as constantly as the sun runs his circle every day about the world, and then begins again the same instant that it ended.

Thus did Mr. Ferrar and his happy family serve God day and night : — thus did they always behave themselves, as in his presence. And they did always eat and drink by the strictest rules of temperance ; eat and drink so as to be ready to rise at midnight, or at the call of a watch-bell, and perform their devotions to God. And it is fit to tell the reader, that many of the clergy that were more inclined to practical piety and de-

votion, than to doubtful and needless disputations, did often come to Gidden Hall, and make themselves a part of that happy society, and stay a week or more, and then join with Mr. Ferrar and the family in these devotions, and assist and ease him or them in their watch by night. And these various devotions had never less than two of the domestic family in the night; and the watch was always kept in the church or oratory, unless in extreme cold winter nights, and then it was maintained in a parlour which had a fire in it, and the parlour was fitted for that purpose. And this course of piety, and great liberality to his poor neighbours, Mr. Ferrar maintained till his death, which was in the year 1639.

Mr. Ferrar's and Mr. Herbert's devout lives were both so noted, that the general report of their sanctity gave them occasion to renew that slight acquaintance which was begun at their being contemporaries in Cambridge; and this new holy friendship was long maintained without any interview, but only by loving and endearing letters. And one testimony of their friendship and pious designs may appear by Mr. Ferrar's commending "The Considerations of John Valdesso" (a book which he had met with in his travels, and translated out of Spanish into English) to be examined and censured by Mr. Herbert before it was made public; which excellent book Mr. Herbert did



read, and returned back with many marginal notes, as they be now printed with it ; and with them, Mr. Herbert's affectionate letter to Mr. Ferrar.

This John Valdesso was a Spaniard, and was for his learning and virtue much valued and loved by the great Emperor Charles the Fifth, whom Valdesso had followed as a cavalier all the time of his long and dangerous wars ; and when Valdesso grew old, and grew weary both of war and the world, he took his fair opportunity to declare to the Emperor, that his resolution was to decline his Majesty's service, and betake himself to a quiet and contemplative life, because there ought to be a vacancy of time betwixt fighting and dying. The Emperor had himself for the same, or other like reasons, put on the same resolution : but God and himself did, till then, only know them ; and he did therefore desire Valdesso to consider well of what he had said, and to keep his purpose within his own breast, till they two might have a second opportunity of a friendly discourse ; which Valdesso promised to do.

In the mean time, the Emperor appoints privately a day for him and Valdesso to meet again, and after a pious and free discourse, they both agreed on a certain day to receive the blessed sacrament publicly, and appointed an eloquent and devout friar to preach a sermon of contempt of



the world, and of the happiness and benefit of a quiet and contemplative life, which the friar did most affectionately. After which sermon, the Emperor took occasion to declare openly, "that the preacher had begot in him a resolution to lay down his dignities, and to forsake the world, and betake himself to a monastical life." And he pretended he had persuaded John Valdesso to do the like; but this is most certain, that after the Emperor had called his son Philip out of England, and resigned to him all his kingdoms, that then the Emperor and John Valdesso did perform their resolutions.

This account of John Valdesso I received from a friend, that had it from the mouth of Mr. Ferrar: and the reader may note, that in this retirement John Valdesso wrote his "Hundred and Ten Considerations," and many other treatises of worth, which want a second Mr. Ferrar to procure and translate them.

After this account of Mr. Ferrar and John Valdesso, I proceed to my account of Mr. Herbert and Mr. Duncon, who, according to his promise, returned from the Bath the fifth day, and then found Mr. Herbert much weaker than he left him: and, therefore, their discourse could not be long; but at Mr. Duncon's parting with him, Mr. Herbert spoke to this purpose: "Sir, I pray give my brother Ferrar an account of the decaying condi-

tion of my body, and tell him I beg him to continue his daily prayers for me ; and let him know, that I have considered, that God only is what he would be ; and that I am, by his grace, become now so like him, as to be pleased with what pleaseth him ; and tell him, that I do not repine, but am pleased with my want of health ; and tell him my heart is fixed on that place where true joy is only to be found ; and that I long to be there, and do wait for my appointed change with hope and patience." Having said this, he did, with so sweet a humility as seemed to exalt him, bow down to Mr. Duncon, and, with a thoughtful and contented look, say to him, " Sir, I pray deliver this little book to my dear brother Ferrar, and tell him, he shall find in it a picture of the many spiritual conflicts that have passed betwixt God and my soul, before I could subject mine to the will of Jesus, my Master in whose service I have now found perfect freedom ; desire him to read it ; and then, if he can think it may turn to the advantage of any dejected poor soul, let it be made public ; if not, let him burn it ; for I and it are less than the least of God's mercies." Thus meanly did this humble man think of this excellent book, which now bears the name of " The Temple ; or, Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations " ; of which Mr. Ferrar would say, " there was in it the picture of a divine soul in every

page ; and that the whole book was such a harmony of holy passions, as would enrich the world with pleasure and piety." And it appears to have done so ; for there have been more than twenty thousand of them sold since the first impression.

And this ought to be noted, that when Mr. Ferrar sent this book to Cambridge to be licensed for the press, the Vice-Chancellor would by no means allow the two so much noted verses,

"Religion stands a tip-toe in our land,  
Ready to pass to the American strand,"

to be printed ; and Mr. Ferrar would by no means allow the book to be printed and want them ; but after some time, and some arguments for and against their being made public, the Vice-Chancellor said, "I knew Mr. Herbert well, and know that he had many heavenly speculations, and was a divine poet ; but I hope the world will not take him to be an inspired prophet, and therefore I license the whole book." So that it came to be printed without the diminution or addition of a syllable, since it was delivered into the hands of Mr. Duncon, save only that Mr. Ferrar hath added that excellent preface that is printed before it.

At the time of Mr. Duncon's leaving Mr. Herbert (which was about three weeks before his death), his old and dear friend Mr. Woodnot came from

London to Bemerton, and never left him till he had seen him draw his last breath, and closed his eyes on his death-bed. In this time of his decay. he was often visited and prayed for by all the clergy that lived near to him, especially by his friends the Bishop and Prebendaries of the cathedral church in Salisbury; but by none more devoutly than his wife, his three nieces (then a part of his family), and Mr. Woodnot, who were the sad witnesses of his daily decay; to whom he would often speak to this purpose: "I now look back upon the pleasures of my life past, and see the content I have taken in beauty, in wit, and music, and pleasant conversation, are now all past by me like a dream or as a shadow that returns not, and are now all become dead to me, or I to them; and I see that as my father and generation hath done before me, so I also shall now suddenly (with Job) make my bed also in the dark; and I praise God I am prepared for it; and I praise him, that I am not to learn patience, now I stand in such need of it; and that I have practised mortification, and endeavoured to die daily, that I might not die eternally; and my hope is, that I shall shortly leave this valley of tears, and be free from all fevers and pain; and, which will be a more happy condition, I shall be free from sin, and all the temptations and anxieties that attend it; and this being past, I shall dwell in the New

Jerusalem ; dwell there with men made perfect ; dwell where these eyes shall see my Master and Saviour, Jesus ; and with him see my dear mother, and all my relations and friends. But I must die or not come to that happy place : and this is my content, that I am going daily towards it ; and that every day which I have lived hath taken a part of my appointed time from me ; and that I shall live the less time, for having lived this and the day past." — These, and the like expressions, which he uttered often, may be said to be his enjoyment of heaven before he enjoyed it. The Sunday before his death, he rose suddenly from his bed or couch, called for one of his instruments, took it into his hand, and said,

“ My God, my God,  
My music shall find thee,  
And every string  
Shall have his attribute to sing.”

And having tuned it, he played and sung :

“ The Sundays of man’s life,  
Threaded together on time’s string,  
Make bracelets to adorn the wife  
Of the eternal, glorious King :  
On Sundays heaven’s door stands ope ;  
Blessings are plentiful and rife,  
More plentiful than hope. ”

Thus he sung on earth such hymns and anthems as the angels, and he, and Mr. Ferrar, now sing in heaven.

Thus he continued ineditating, and praying, and rejoicing, till the day of his death; and on that day said to Mr. Woodnot, "My dear friend, I am sorry I have nothing to present to my merciful God but sin and misery; but the first is pardoned; and a few hours will now put a period to the latter; for I shall suddenly go hence and be no more seen." Upon which expression, Mr. Woodnot took occasion to remember him of the reëdifying Layton Church, and his many acts of mercy; to which he made answer, saying, "They be good works, if they be sprinkled with the blood of Christ, and not otherwise." After this discourse he became more restless, and his soul seemed to be weary of her earthly tabernacle; and this uneasiness became so visible, that his wife, his three nieces, and Mr. Woodnot stood constantly about his bed, beholding him with sorrow and an unwillingness to lose the sight of him, whom they could not hope to see much longer. As they stood thus beholding him, his wife observed him to breathe faintly, and with much trouble; and observed him to fall into a sudden agony, which so surprised her, that she fell into a sudden passion, and required of him to know how he did; to which his answer was, "that he had



passed a conflict with his last enemy, and had overcome him by the merits of his Master, Jesus." After which answer he looked up and saw his wife and nieces weeping to an extremity, and charged them, "if they loved him, to withdraw into the next room, and there pray every one alone for him; for nothing but their lamentations could make his death uncomfortable." To which request their sighs and tears would not suffer them to make any reply, but they yielded him a sad obedience, leaving only with him Mr. Woodnot and Mr. Bostock. Immediately after they had left him, he said to Mr. Bostock, "Pray, sir, open that door, then look into that cabinet, in which you may easily find my last will, and give it into my hand:" which being done, Mr. Herbert delivered it into the hand of Mr. Woodnot, and said, "My old friend, I here deliver you my last will, in which you will find that I have made you my sole executor for the good of my wife and nieces; and I desire you to show kindness to them, as they shall need it. I do not desire you to be just, for I know you will be so for your own sake; but I charge you, by the religion of our friendship, to be careful of them." And having obtained Mr. Woodnot's promise to be so, he said, "I am now ready to die." After which words he said, "Lord, forsake me not, now my strength faileth me; but grant me mercy for the merits of



my Jesus. And now, Lord, — Lord, now receive my soul.” And with those words he breathed forth his divine soul, without any apparent disturbance, Mr. Woodnot and Mr. Bostock attending his last breath, and closing his eyes.

Thus he lived, and thus he died like a saint, unspotted of the world, full of alms-deeds, full of humility, and all the examples of a virtuous life; which I cannot conclude better, than with this borrowed observation :

“ ——— All must to their cold graves ;  
But the religious actions of the just  
Smell sweet in death, and blossom in the dust.”

Mr. George Herbert's have done so to this, and will doubtless do so to succeeding generations. I have but this to say more of him, that if Andrew Melvin died before him, then George Herbert died without an enemy. I wish (if God shall be so pleased) that I may be so happy as to die like him.

IZ. WA.

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There is a debt justly due to the memory of Mr. Herbert's virtuous wife ; a part of which I will endeavour to pay, by a very short account of the remainder of her life, which shall follow.

She continued his disconsolate widow about six years, bemoaning herself and complaining that she had lost the delight of her eyes; but more that she had lost the spiritual guide for her poor soul; and would often say, "O that I had, like holy Mary, the mother of Jesus, treasured up all his sayings in my heart; but since I have not been able to do that, I will labor to live like him, that where he now is, I may be also." And she would often say (as the prophet David for his son Absalom) "O that I had died for him!" Thus she continued mourning, till time and conversation had so moderated her sorrows, that she became the happy wife of Sir Robert Cook, of Highnam, in the county of Gloucester, Knight. And though he put a high value on the excellent accomplishments of her mind and body, and was so like Mr. Herbert, as not to govern like a master, but as an affectionate husband; yet she would, even to him, often take occasion to mention the name of Mr. George Herbert, and say, "that name must live in her memory, till she put off mortality." By Sir Robert, she had only one child, a daughter, whose parts and plentiful estate make her happy in this world, and her well using of them gives a fair testimony that she will be so in that which is to come.

Mrs. Herbert was the wife of Sir Robert eight years, and lived his widow about fifteen; all which

time she took a pleasure in mentioning and commending the excellencies of Mr. George Herbert. She died in the year 1663, and lies buried at Highnam; Mr. Herbert in his own church, under the altar, and covered with a grave-stone without any inscription.

This Lady Cook had preserved many of Mr. Herbert's private writings, which she intended to make public, but they and Highnam House were burnt together, by the late rebels, and so lost to posterity.

I. W.